IX. WEAPONS AND WARFARE

Weapons

The Tanala Menabe have a number of traditions regarding the introduction of various weapons. According to these, the aborigines of their territory had no arms except wooden spears. These were made from *Lambinanaa*, a large tree with moderately hard, heavy wood, or *Aninona*, a small palm which has an extremely hard rind ⅛ to ¼ inch thick. The latter wood is said to be somewhat poisonous, wounds received from it festering and healing with difficulty. The *Lambinanaa* spears were sometimes plain, sometimes forked, like those used until recent times for fishing (Fig. 2, d). The *Aninona* spears were simply pointed staves. Neither was barbed.

The first invaders are said to have been armed with *Aninona* spears, a peculiar missile weapon called *hitsia* or *antsiaka*, slings, iron axes of two types and shields. The blow-gun came into use later, although still in remote times. Spears with iron heads did not come into use until near the beginning of the historic period. They were copies from those of the plateau tribes. Guns were obtained from the east coast tribes, who acted as middlemen between the Tanala and European traders. Swords and fighting knives were unknown until the Imerina domination and never became popular.

In historic times the principal weapon has been the spear, *lefona*. Spears of *Aninona* wood are still occasionally used and are said to be little inferior to those of iron. They are usually simple poles, 5 to 6 feet long and about 1 inch wide, ground to a smoothly tapering point. In a few specimens the shape of the iron spears has been imitated (Fig. 24, k). Iron spears are divided by the natives into three types, based on the shape of the blade (Fig. 24, f, g, h). They are usually crudely made and lack the spade-like butt piece characteristic of other Madagascar spears. Heavy spears (Fig. 24, f) were, and still are, used in pig hunting, the lighter forms only in war. They were always thrown, the axe being used for close fighting. It is said that war spears were sometimes poisoned, but the composition of the poison has been forgotten.

The *hitsia* is of considerable interest. It seems to have no parallels outside Madagascar but may be distantly related to some African throwing knives. It is made from two straight spikes of *Aninona* wood about ⅛ inch in diameter and 16 to 18 inches long (Fig. 25, c). These are notched in the center and bound together

1: Linton E-6 (1935-37) 1938 970 Tanala 970

XV. WARS OF THE TANALA IKONGO

(From manuscript of Rainilaiarivony)

Tanala-Hova War

About 1815, during the reign of Radama I, expeditions were sent out nearly every winter to attack the southern tribes, Antaimorona, Antaifasina, Antaivato, etc. Many people were killed and numbers of men, women and children taken captive to the plateau. The tribes passed under the rule of Radama, and Hova posts were established at Vohipeno, Mahamasina, Farafangana, Ankarana, Vangaindrano, etc. Only the Tanala remained free, for they had an impenetrable refuge in their mountains and heavy forests. 175

About 1830 Ranavalona I sent officers and soldiers to inspect the southern posts. Peace reigned everywhere. Satisfied with the situation, the expedition returned to Tananarive, passing by way of Ikongo. When it arrived at Mahaly near Sahakondro, the commander ordered the Tanala to clear the road. Instead of obeying his order the Tanala kings, Andriamaniostra, Ivy (Marohala), Bevazaha, Rainamy (Sandrabe), Mahery, Andriamamelika (Morohala-Ambany), sent their men to stop the mission. There was a battle at Hanka, near Sahakondro. The Hova soldiers strongly resisted their attack and continued their journey to Tananarive. When they arrived at Tananarive, Rataimieta, the commander, reported everything that had occurred to the queen. She sent a strong expedition against the Tanala, who were defeated and submitted for the time being. The expedition brought back much loot to Tananarive. Later Ranavalona invited all the Tanala kings to come to Tananarive under pretext of making blood brotherhood with them. Andriamaniostra, Rainamy, Ivy, and Andriamamelika went, but on arrival were murdered without pity by the queen. Some years later Ranavalona I sent officers and soldiers to the region of Ikongo to force all the chiefs of clans to send to Imerina as captives the banderesat of their children zaza tsongo izan-dokahan. The Tanala had to comply with this cruel order and the children were carried off as slaves to Tananarive. The children were concentrated at certain places and these unfortunate places afterward bore the name "Vohidranomaso" because of the hot tears shed by the poor mothers at being separated from their children. Later Ranavalona sent again to get the older descendants (*Faina dia nasaza*). This was *soky anak'anakany*. Finally they took all the children who

175 were 9 or 10 years old and a meter tall. This was the case every day. Because of these slave raids the region became deserted. The people who had not been caught fled to the forest. Many allied themselves with the Hovas of Mahitsemoina and Ambalavao. Unable to stay long in the forest, the fugitives returned to their villages. They named Rahavoky, son of Andriamanisetra, assassinated by Ranavalona, as king. He, being afraid of the queen, fled south. Tsimanontany, younger brother of Andriamanisetra, talked one day with his nephew, Tsiandrofa, about the bad situation of the kingdom. Tsimanontany said, "If you can save our country and get its inhabitants out of the power of the Hova kingdom, I will give you the realm." "I would like to accept your offer," Tsiandrofa said, "but you have children who can succeed you. I fear that if I deliver the country and bring tranquillity again, you will give the realm to your children." "I promise to give it to you in the name of *Zanahary* and my ancestors," Tsimanontany said. Tsiandrofa accepted. His uncle sprinkled him with water and invoked the ancestors that he might save the country in its danger and be a great king of the Tanala after the battle.

159 Biography of Tsiandrofa: He was born about 1815, son of Politra and Thevitra. From infancy he was noted for his fine physique. His calves were large, his arms muscular and his fingers very large. His large black eyes were protected by brows and lashes as long as they were thick. His head was covered with beautiful slightly curly hair. His teeth were solid and regular. At the age of fifteen he was a great galliard, tall and remarkably strong. In the boys' fights he was general and never met his match. His favorite sport was chasing wild pigs and in this he never used a spear. He run after the animal, caught it by the hind leg and beat it against the ground. It is also told of him that later, in the course of his expeditions, his soldiers had trouble in passing flooded rivers. He would stand chest deep in the water, take the soldiers one by one, and throw them to the other bank. He was also very intelligent. Sometimes his subjects put many questions to him. He had not time to listen to them individually, so talked to them in a group and gave each one his answer. Finally, he was benevolent and generous. These were the qualities of the young chief who dared to oppose the strong army of Ranavalona I.

175 He was twenty at the time his uncle Tsimanontany asked his advice. When he was about twenty-one he mounted to the summit of Mount Ikongo with his *fanolohaky* [officers], Tsiahy, Tsiony, Tsivo-

sons, Iviza, Andrianamahavy, Mandromana, Tsilavaky and Tsimalafay, who were sakaiza (common cats), and Indriatavonany, Tsimisara, Andrianiarana and Mosaky, who were Zafiraimbo. From this stronghold Tsiandrofa attacked and looted the Hova convoys destined for the southern posts. When she heard of the insurrection Ranavalona sent an expedition commanded by Rainimiaka 12 honors. When it arrived at the foot of Ikongo they sought in vain for a way up and returned without result to Tananarive. Rainitsara 12 honors was chosen to command the second expedition. He was especially hopeful of victory for he thought his predecessor was not an able man. He counted greatly on his fetishes, but when he got to the foot of Ikongo he was discouraged and returned to Tananarive. The third expedition was commanded by Prince Rambosalama. Everyone thought he would conquer but he had no better luck. The three officers who succeeded him tried in vain to climb to the village. There were a few skirmishes, but the soldiers, tired out, retired without result. A famous warrior, Rainimaroloky, 13 honors, was then sent. His soldiers fought bravely, but the Ikongo were well protected and resisted strongly. He was forced to retire. When she heard of this check the queen was furious. "I have a rival in the south," she said, "I will never stop trying to conquer him while I have a soldier left." She sent Rainitompo 13 honors and Andrianjafy 13 honors, with a strong army, to reinforce Rainimaroloky. Hoping to find a path, they climbed the mountain. The Tanala let them get fairly high, then threw down on them tree trunks and big stones, which they had prepared in advance. The Hova soldiers were almost annihilated. Afraid to try to scale the mountain again, they vainly tried to find a passage farther to the south. For six months the Hova camped around the mountain. Finally, unable to get at the Tanala, the two expeditions commanded by Rainimaroloky and Rainitompo returned to Tananarive. Before his departure Rainimaroloky burned his camp so that the soldiers of Rainitompo could not descend (for the two generals were jealous of each other). Taking advantage of this Tsiandrofa pursued the soldiers and these, without commander and in disorder, fled for their lives. Many were killed, for they could not get past the fire. It was here that Rataida, 11 honors, was captured, being unable to get away. The Tanala carried him to their village on their shoulders and jeered at the Hova officers, saying, "We have captured your famous warrior. He asks you to come to his aid. Why do you abandon him?" No one came to his aid, everyone fleeing for his

175 life. When they arrived at the camp Rainimaviaby made a balcony to rescue Ratsiala from the hands of the enemy. The soldiers were unwilling to return and Ra nida was left in the hands of the enemy. When they came to Tananarive, Rainimaviaby told the queen that Ratsiala had been captured. He was degraded and two soldiers who had lost their guns were burned alive.

Several expeditions commanded by the officers Rainimanonja 14 honors, Rabago 13 honors, Ratianaikely 13 honors, Andrianaivoadafotra 13 honors, Ratsiaravandava 13 honors, and Raisitrimo 12 honors were sent to take Ikongo. The troops camped at Tsianonariva, to the west of Ikongo. Two days after they had installed themselves the soldiers of Tsiandrofa fired on their camp heavily. One of Rainimaviaby's aides was killed. The next day the battle commenced, the Hova soldiers assaulting Ikongo. They followed a small, almost inaccessible path through the forest. Tsiandrofa had suspended big pieces of wood from the trees by lianas. The enemy were allowed to mount and when they were crowded together in a bad place, the vines were cut and many crushed to death. The officers did not lose their courage. Rainitsimihaha 13 honors, Ratsiaravandava 13 honors and Rainikilaby 13 honors took command. The combat recommenced. In the afternoon the Hova arrived at Tsianopapango which they took, the Tanala fleeing. The following night Tsiandrofa, taking advantage of the moonlight, opened a heavy fire on the Hova camp, causing considerable loss. The officers Rainitsimihaha and Ratsiaravandava fled to the forest to the east of Tsianopapango and hid in a cave. The soldiers also scattered. Only Rainikilaby remained and took command. The other two officers did not return to the camp until the next day. Nothing was said because they were officers but two Hova and a Betsileo who were absent at roll call were burned alive. Rainimanonja and the other officers sent a letter to the queen telling her that they had arrived at Tsianopapango and that only a short distance separated the two hostile camps. The Hova troops waited there and tried to find a way up Ikongo, but in vain. Finally they descended to Tsianonariva. At that moment Rakotondrabemila, aide-de-camp to Radama I, arrived accompanied by an officer to try to make peace. The Tanala received him well and brought him to the summit of Ikongo by a difficult route, in front of Tsiandrofa. The two envoys said that the queen was unwilling to continue the war and asked peace. "We accept," Tsiandrofa said, "on condition that you descend to Vinanitelo. There, below, we will make

proposals of peace. We will follow behind you." The Hova officers, ignorant of Tsiandrofa's plans, were unwilling to comply. Neither side wanted to go to Vinanitelo and the parley came to nothing. Descending to the Hova camp Rakotondrainvelo said that the way was very difficult, impossible for an army. There were large plantations of manioc, sweet potatoes, taro, etc., on top and a never failing spring, so that it was impossible to take the mountain by siege. The officers, being ashamed to return to Tananarive, transferred their camp to Tsinanantiva. The soldiers were afraid to go foraging in bands of less than 20 to 100. Tsiandrofa often invited them to battle, but they refused. The Hova soldiers could not resist long because of internal dissensions and sickness, which killed many, including the officer Rabaingo. Being ashamed of their lack of success and wishing to show their courage, the Hova officers bought a hundred guns, drums, trumpets, and axes from the Bara and after nine months of insignificant attacks returned to Tananarive with this false loot. Thanks to Tsiandrofa the Tanala had been delivered from the rule of Ranavalona.

TANALA-FRENCH WAR

After the Tanala-Hova war Tsiandrofa became high king of Ikongo and reigned nearly fifty years. He administered his realm peacefully and encouraged agriculture, trade and industry. He reformed the *didy* [laws] of the Tanala and enforced them benevolently upon his subjects. Sometimes, after the harvest of the tony rice he sent out expeditions against the allies of the Hova and the Antavaratra (Ifanadiana), the Antaimorona and the Betsileo. He brought back slaves, cattle, weapons and pots. Later, about 1890, a European named Dejardin (?) entered the region of Ikongo and made an alliance with Tsiandrofa. The king expressed his satisfaction. The foreigner asked him to get wax for him, in exchange for which he promised to send guns and powder. The king ordered the natives to gather wax and Dejardin got a great quantity of it and returned home, but sent nothing in return. Another merchant *Vazukolava* [lit. "tall stranger"], probably an Englishman named Parvins, imported a quantity of guns and powder which he exchanged for slaves and cattle.

Finally M. Besson, Resident of Fianarantsoa, arrived at the Ikongo in the course of his tour, to visit King Tsiandrofa. He had made blood brotherhood with Andriamanapaka, son of Tsiandrofa. He promised the king that he would always defend him against the

175 attacks of his enemies. Tsiandrefa told this alliance to his nephew Andriampanoha, hereditary prince of the Tanala, but the latter was hostile to alliances with the whites and when M. Besson ordered the clearing of the roads in the region, Andriampanoha assembled the *Notables* and made them the following *kabary*: "The white allies of Andrianampoinkha have ordered the opening of the trails in our region and are forcing us to that labor. Undoubtedly they want to bring here their relatives and friends, for our region is fertile. I do not wish that and I order you to build houses on Ikongo and repair our forts." The *Notables* obeyed his orders and within a few months two-thirds of the population were installed on the summit of Mount Ikongo. They brought with them everything necessary, food, arms and munitions and left their cattle under guard at the foot of the mountain. Seeing this state of things the Resident asked Tsiandrefa the reason for this movement. The king answered that he did not know, for the order did not come from him but from Andriampanoha. M. Besson told the king to make his nephew come down. The prince refused and wished, on the contrary, to drive the *sanaka* [foreigner] out of the territory. M. Besson insisted several times that the prince descend, but he paid no attention to it and went on fortifying the mountain. Finally the Resident told Tsiandrefa that he would make Andriampanoha come down by force. He then went back to Fianarantsoa and returned a few weeks later with a troop. The French government addressed an ultimatum to the prince, but the revolt continued and war was begun. A detachment commanded by Lieutenant Bertrand commenced to gather in the cattle at Sahavondrony, at the eastern foot of the mountain. There was a skirmish and several Tanala were wounded, losing the cattle. Some days later Besson directed the attack on Ikongo in person. The troop was divided into several sections to surround the mountain. Bertrand commanded on the east, at Andakatombary, Tsiazomby and Ambatorangoty, Besson on the north opposite Andriampanoha and Marumaniry and a French officer with Raminovola on the east at Antamboneky. The defense was conducted by many native chiefs: Andriampanoha, Tsaihita, Indazona, Andriamanetony, Tsiholany, Andriamitahoncny. The most famous warriors were Panesy, Masimana, Ilatsa, Masilaza, Andrianareny, Tsiaroha, Tsivahiny, Andriamanondrikony, Manendy, Andriananantsony, Tsimano, Mahaira. Their *ombiasys* were Betsitsy, Tsiabera, Andrianeke and Matra. The attack lasted several weeks. Finally Bertrand employed a stratagem. He pretended to return to Fian-

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ervations with his section, but after dark turned and followed a route up the northwest side of the mountain under guidance of Andriamanapaka. Next morning the section had arrived secretly almost at the summit, which was undefended. At dawn the attack recommenced on all fronts. All the Tanala men went back to their fortifications and Bertrand's section advanced to the highest part of the summit, fired in the air and sounded their trumpets, as a signal. The firing on the flanks ceased. At that moment Bertrand's soldiers fired into the rear of the *mondo* and killed many of the enemy. The rest fled in disorder. The soldiers burned the village. Most of the soldiers retired after a post had been established on the summit of the mountain. Driven from the mountain, Andriampanoha and his company fled south and took refuge among the Mananabondro. About a year after their defeat Andriampanoha and his accomplices went to Ambaby (Farafangana) and made their submission before Resident Benevent. They were allowed to return home. They returned and each rejoined his family except Andriampanoha, who did not want to stay at Ambolomadinika (his father's place) and installed himself at Vohibosanjo, east of Antaranjaha. There he made a grand stay in the forest of Ambolaniva.

One day the officer in command at Fort Carnot ordered Andriampanoha to furnish him a hundred men to carry rice from Lamboleby (Ankarimbelo) to Antanambao (Fort Carnot). He refused and a few days later was ordered to come to the fort. His people would not let him go, sending instead his *Anakandrians*, Taivahiny. Arriving at the post Taivahiny told the officer that Andriampanoha was sick and could not come. When it was learned that Andriampanoha not only was not sick, but was absent from his house, Taivahiny was garotted and shot for complicity in rebellion. Before sending this false information Andriampanoha and his comrades had taken to the forest and plotted an insurrection. The band of rebels persecuted a white merchant at Sahasinaka and burned the native village. They attacked the posts at Fort Carnot and Sahalanona, but failed and were defeated by the French in skirmishes at Sahavondrony, Antamboholava, Ankaramena, Analamaloka, and Taimalao. They killed the native governor at the forest of Ambodinosoka, Taivy, and the chief Taimiharako at Ambodivakoka. They burned the village of Antaranjaha. Finally they went to Fianarantsoa and made their submission there. For political reasons Andriampanoha, Izaihita, Indasona, Taimamo, Betaitay and Isaly were deported to the island of St. Marie in 1902.